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PRAGMATISTS, JOINERS, AND BELONGERS: DEMOCRATIZATION AND THE CULTURE OF MASS POLITICS IN SPAIN.

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PRAGMATISTS, JOINERS, AND BELONGERS: DEMOCRATIZATION AND THE CULTURE OF MASS POLITICS IN SPAIN

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PRAGMATISTS, JOINERS AND BELONGERS: DEMOCRATIZATION AND THE CULTURE OF MASS POLITICS IN SPAIN

Spain has been the big success story of democratization. Its performance in overcoming such challenges as economic restructuring and regional separatism has led to a reversal of its reputation for political volatility. The new regime has been vaunted as an inspiration if not a blueprint for countries in Latin America as well as for the fledging experiments in Eastern Europe and for the Soviet Union, and it has aroused considerable curiosity in the newly democratizing nations of East Asia (McDonough, 1989; Shin, 1989).

Whatever its exportability, democracy in Spain has been in place long enough—going on two decades now—to provide an empirical basis for taking stock of what we know and what we don't know about the ingredients of democratization in a key area of Europe. Our focus is on the role of political culture in democratization—on the evolving characteristics of lines of conflict, both longstanding and shorter-term, vis-à-vis institutional and structural changes.

The manner of presentation is unorthodox. We move from an analysis of what we know with some certainty to an exploration of patterns of democratization for which theoretical models have yet to be worked out in detail. During the last decade-and-a-half we have carried out four national surveys in Spain, and our interests have evolved.[1] As questions regarding some facets of democratization have come to closure, fresh ones have opened up.

One set of concerns has involved the domains or levels of democratization and the possible linkages between them. Our early surveys examined attitudes toward the political and the economic aspects of

democratization—toward the legitimacy of the new regime in balance with the old one, and toward questions of economic opportunity and fairness. A key feature of the Spanish transition, one in which it resembles the course of change in Portugal, in Taiwan, in South Korea, and to a lesser extent in Brazil, but that sets it apart from events in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, is that political transformation has not involved economic revolution. Antecedent reforms in economic policy, together with ongoing prosperity, helped smooth the transition and blunted appeals for radical social change. Liberalization has paid off.

Our investigation into the growth of political legitimacy and popular perceptions of economic performance has yielded an array of findings about the connections between depolarization and prosperity that are summarized in the following pages. This line of inquiry has also prompted us to probe into a sphere that lacks a handy label like "political" or "socioeconomic." It concerns the democratization of everyday life, of micro-structures of authority long thought to be private or personal rather than political in the conventional sense. In one respect this departure is novel, emerging in our recent surveys and reflecting a curiosity about the day-to-day infrastructures of politics with a small "p," those that are embedded in vernacular hierarchies like the family (Walzer, 1988). In another sense, however, the focus harks back to the early days of studies of political culture, with their notions of the functionality of congruence between micro-social patterns of authority and macro-political forms of organization (Eckstein, 1980). If a label is needed for the questioning of these habits, protocols, and putative linkages, it can be called "cultural democratization."

Another set of concerns centers around a dual feature of mass politics in Spain that constitutes a paradox in the light of democratic theory. Perhaps

the great drama, the story at the center-stage of Spanish democratization, is how undramatic the process has become. Old ferocities have given way to moderation. Depolarization—a virtual end of ideology—has set in. Paralleling this development, however, has been a shortfall in organizational participation in civil society. The paucity of associational life runs counter to standard prescriptions for a healthy democracy. Puzzlement over the apparent tepidity and spottiness of intermediate institutions converges with our interest in the attachment of Spaniards to forms of sociability and hierarchy represented by traditional, primary groups like the family and neighborhood networks.

DIMENSIONS OF DEMOCRATIZATION

Democratization can be depicted in bare-bones fashion as a two-dimensional change comprising political liberalization and movement toward social equity. Political opening—seen at a minimum as the overthrow of what Americans used to call "tyranny"—and the reduction of economic disparities tend to be presented as mutually reinforcing rather than as a series of stages (Muller, 1988) or, as was often the case in the nineteenth century, as close-to-incompatible (Bunce, 1990-91).

Still, taken together, these changes harbor a certain ambiguity. On the one hand liberalization signifies pluralism in the Schumpeterian vein. It entails the freeing-up of competition between organizations—notably, electoral competition between parties—without reshaping hierarchical structures within organizations (Lipset, 1960). On the other hand, the formulation suggests the possibility of extending democratic practices beyond the strictly political and perhaps even the socioeconomic realms (Marshall,

1968) toward spheres of society that have traditionally been considered to be private.

Before getting into this progressive unfolding, however, it is worth noting two further aspects of political democratization proper. One involves variations on territorial decentralization. Despite micronationalist violence, devolution has prospered in Spain. The delicate alignment between central and subnational tiers of government has theoretical as well as practical consequences, since democracies may adopt relatively centralized or relatively federal institutional forms (Lijphart, 1989).

Participation, especially the growth of membership in intermediate organizations, is another pivotal feature of political democratization. Here, as we shall see, the shortfall of associationalism in Spain presents a puzzle for democratic theory. The part of our research discussed here attends more closely to issues involving participation than to the question to devolution.

Both of these aspects of democratization—decentralization and participation—can be thought of as components of the enrichment of civil society (Hindess, 1991). Pressing this notion further brings us to a consideration of the extension of democratic norms and procedures to areas that are not usually portrayed as political even though they touch the lives of many citizens. It raises the question of workplace democracy, for example (Adamson, 1990). It also brings into question inherited forms of power relations in institutions of civic socialization like the family. The unfolding implied by the democratization of everyday life goes beyond pluralism as customarily understood. It raises the possibility of transformations in both the economic hierarchies of industrialism and some of the vernacular institutions—the hierarchical family and male-female roles more generally—inherited from preindustrial times (Keane, 1991).

Some (Todd, 1985) argue that a rough match between the architecture of smaller social units and larger political institutions makes for collective stability. However, evidence of a causal link between micro-democracy—for example, democratic family structures or consultative work arrangements—and the soundness of democracy in the large is thin-to-nonexistent, and nothing in pluralist theory presupposes that structures of authority at different political and social levels need be uniformly democratic.

Our approach takes changes in the politics of everyday life, embedded in such arrangements as the family, seriously. But our working assumption is that democratization at these intimate levels proceeds as a reflex of or in tandem with broader flows of political and economic democratization. The possibility of feedback from micro- to macro-levels, or of a tidy congruence between the two, is for the moment left indeterminate (Hareven, 1991).

Another set of preliminaries, usually thought of as preconditions rather than constitutive elements of democracy, needs to be considered. Economic growth is regularly viewed as necessary or at least highly desirable for the tenability of democracy. Such development furnishes a utilitarian payoff for the risks of democratization, and it brings in its train a host of modernizing, presumably supportive transformations (Lipset and Turner, 1987).

Somewhat more nebulous are the cultural metamorphoses that prepare the ground for democracy. Of these one of the most crucial is ideological depolarization: a loosening of the ties that bind historical antagonisms. The supposition is that attenuation of this sort undercuts the penchant for either-or conflict and promotes tolerance and bargaining (Dahl, 1971). In Spain a classic example of one such cultural nexus has been the age-

old overlapping of religious belief and conservatism, together with the intertwining of secularism and anticlericalism.

The "dimensions" of democratization catalogued above can vary independently of one another. Cases of democratization in which all supposedly propitious conditions are maximized probably don't exist. As a practical matter, the loosely connected, stochastic nature of democratization enables us to treat its components in modular fashion. It also encourages us to search for reinforcing linkages and flexible dissociations between the levels and domains of democratization, without pressing for nonrecursive cause-effect paths. Our perspective here is panoramic. For the time being we are more interested in combinatorial patterns—some of which may be anomalous from the standpoint of democratic theory—than in causation.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Three rival diagnoses regarding the growth of political institutions under democracy can be discerned. One stresses the development of attachment to political parties as a vital sign of democratic representation (Converse, 1969). Parties are seen as indispensable vehicles for assuring the accountability of elites and the aggregation of interests. Strong, more or less reliable identification with parties undergirds democratic stability. Another, neocorporatist view contends that political parties have become increasingly marginal to the functioning of contemporary democracies and have tended to be displaced by proliferating interest groups that may or may not render democracies manageable (Berger, 1981; Maier, 1987). Still another perspective argues that both pluralist parties and corporatist agencies are succumbing to, or are at least being severely challenged by, the electronic media as structuring devices for electorates (Kellner, 1991). From this angle, the nuts-and-bolts

repertory of political organization is giving way to less palpable but quite powerful technologies of mass persuasion.

The first approach is straightforward in linking the growth of partisan attachments with the consolidation of democracy. The latter two perspectives are equivocal, though not uniformly pessimistic, about what the expansion of interest groups and the media signifies for democracy.[2]

Our data permit a rough check of the first two of these ideas. Table 1 gives the percentages over time of Spaniards reporting that they identify with a political party, that they belong to at least one voluntary organization, and that they are members of a labor union. The results are not encouraging for either the pluralist or the neocorporatist models of democratic development.

Less than a majority of Spaniards identify with any political party. This percentage rose to 60 percent in 1984, two years after the PSOE (the socialist party) gained power. But by 1990 it had fallen back to 46 percent, the baseline figure for 1978. Similarly, no more than a third of the citizenry reports membership in any voluntary association. Finally, the proportion of unionized Spaniards seems actually to have declined.

While it is difficult to assemble comparable figures for other countries, levels of political involvement appear to be on the low side in a nation that ranks as high as Spain does on indicators of economic development (Instituto Sindical de Estudios, 1989). The prediction of democratic theory with regard to an evolutionary binding-in of partisanship turns out to be laggard at best (Barnes, McDonough and López Pina, 1989). And unless one is willing to construe corporatism as a steeply topdown system of economic orchestration in which most people are neither involved nor officially represented, the drop-off in the numbers for union membership diminishes the credibility of the neocorporatist label for Spain (Wilson, 1983).

TABLE 1.

ASSOCIATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN SPAIN, 1978-90

	1978	1980	1984	1990
% identifying with political party	46	46	60	46
% belonging to one or more voluntary associations	36	27	36	30
%union members	12	8	5	5

As for organizational membership, while net growth has been negative, from 36 to 30 percent of the population, it remains moot whether this level is low by crossnational standards. An informed, perhaps charitable guess would lead us to rank it as medium-low (McDonough, Barnes, López Pina, 1984). On balance, Spanish civil society seems not to have undergone a sustained burst of associationalism during its democratic years.

CULTURAL CHANGE

Classifying cultural trends as democratic or nondemocratic is a chancy business. At first blush, regardless of theoretical expectations, measurement of cultural phenomena may seem even more slippery than the identification of changes in associational life. In addition, aside from questions of measurement, a shift to the ideological left is not evidently more democratic than a shift to the right. Associational membership goes up or down, and figuring out the meaning of such change—if it can be detected in the first place—is not very troublesome. But interpretation of the direction of cultural shifts is problematic.

Two complementary ways of approaching such problems present themselves. One is to suspend attempts at "democratic" and "nondemocratic" labeling and to concentrate on identifying trends in values, as opposed to presumably shallower opinions. Whatever their tie-in with democracy, cultural shifts like these turn out to be less elusive than estimates of organizational activity. Left-right placement is a classic illustration of a deep-seated orientation for which reliable measurements are available.

A second strategy adds theoretical weight to the tallying of separate trends. It involves monitoring changes in the relations between cultural indicators. For example, a slackening over time in the association between ideological (left-versus-right) and religious dispositions would suggest depolarization and, by implication, an increase in the tractability of mass politics. Changes of this sort can be understood as less momentous than "paradigm-shifts" but more significant than mere fluctuations in preferences on specific issues considered one-by-one. They are parameter-shifts that represent alterations in the conventions by which people put grand antagonisms together or compartmentalize them. They reflect changes in the coordinates of the cognitive maps that citizens bring to politics, a reordering of "cleavages" (Lipset and Rokkan, 1968).

Table 2 arrays the raw changes in a selection of single indicators. It shows the percentage of Spaniards who claim to be affiliated with a religious denomination. It also shows the mean position on an ideological scale running from left to right, and on similar scales assessing satisfaction with "the way democracy is working," with the present government, as well as with the Franco regime.[3]

TABLE 2.

CULTURAL AND POLITICAL INDICATORS, SPAIN, 1978-90

	1978	1980	1984	1990
% affiliated with any religious denomination	78	78	83	83
Mean position on left-right continuum	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.4
Mean satisfaction "with the way democracy is working"	4.5	4.2	5.5	5.6
Mean satisfaction with government	4.5	4.2	5.4	5.5
Mean satisfaction with "the last ten years of the Franco regime."	3.6	3.7	4.1	---

On the average, no significant change is detectable in either religiosity or left-right placement. About eight out of ten Spaniards claim to be "believers," a percentage that if anything has edged up a bit from the benchmark year. Ideologically, Spaniards continue to tilt slightly to the center-left.[4]

By contrast, two other cultural indicators display impressive change. Satisfaction with the government has on the average gone up since the transition from the UCD (center-right) governments of the early days of redemocratization to the ascent of the center-left PSOE. Satisfaction with democracy—a measure that does in fact tap legitimacy for the regime as well as support for particular governments—closely parallels this rise (McDonough, Barnes and López Pina, 1986b).[5]

These trends and non-trends seem favorable to the consolidation of democracy. The legitimacy of the regime is established. The persistently high levels of religiosity imply an anti-democratic counter-trend only in light of simplistic theories about the salubrious connection between secularization and democracy (Wilson, 1982).

Still, the results are far from self-explanatory. Figure 3 unravels some of their implications from a slightly more complex perspective. Here the correlations between cultural indicators are presented.

TABLE 3. EVOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN RELIGIOSITY, LEFT-RIGHT ORIENTATION, GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY, 1978-1990

	1978	1980	1984	1990
r (religiosity, left-right)	.45	.51	.42	.29
r (left-right, satisfaction with democracy)	.20	.10	-.13	-.13
r (religiosity, satisfaction with democracy)	.20	.11	.00	.01
r (left-right, government support)	.30	.24	-.29	-.24
r (religiosity, government support)	.30	.20	-.03	.03

The data tell a story of gradual though not-quite-steady depolarization. The top-row correlations in the high .40s and low .50s reported for 1978 and 1980 closely resemble the associations commonly reported between religiosity and left-right orientation in other Latin countries—Italy and France, for example—with a history of clerical-versus-secular conflicts. With the passing

of the eighties these correlations, though still positive, show a marked decline.

This piece of evidence, suggestive but unpersuasive on its own, picks up conceptual resonance in conjunction with adjacent patterns of association and attenuation. As it happens, the switch from positive to negative in the correlations between left-right placement and government support, without much change in the absolute magnitude of the correlations, does not buttress the case for overall depolarization; this reversal is easily explained as reflecting the conjunctural change from a center-right to a center-left government. Even here, however, the modest size of the coefficients, regardless of their sign, indicates a rather low degree of polarization between the parties as incarnations of ideological alternatives to begin with.

The shrinking of the association of religiosity with both government and regime support furnishes more convincing evidence of a cooling of cultural antagonisms. By 1984 there is simply no relationship between religious sentiment and either of these political orientations. Religious attachment appears to have little to do, one way or the other, with popular attitudes toward democracy or toward the government in Spain.

A subtle but significant pattern in the differential connection of left-right placement with government and regime support can also be detected. As previously noted, the nexus of left-right placement and satisfaction with the government is modest but consistent. The corresponding connection between left-right placement and satisfaction with democracy turns out to be weaker, indicating a degree of separation between support for the government and support for the broader system. In Spain democracy is much less controversial ideologically, less a matter of partisanship, than it used to be.

Constructs such as left-right placement and religiosity are supposed to be generic, with the advantage of crossnational comparability. They can also be rather abstract, with a certain imprecision of meaning. A complementary way to get at changes in the symbolic order of mass politics is to gauge the popularity of concrete figures who are invested with a cultural charge. The role of King Juan Carlos as a psychological anchor has been distinctive during the democratic transition. Shifts in the degree to which prominent figures are associated with otherwise vaporous leftist and rightist tendances helps make changes in patterns of polarization visible.

TABLE 4. AVERAGE POPULARITY (1=LOW . . . 10=HIGH) OF POLITICAL FIGURES IN SPAIN, 1978-90

	1978	1980	1984	1990
King Juan Carlos	6.4	6.5	8.0	7.6
Adolfo Suárez	5.4	5.1	5.4	4.4
Felipe González	5.6	5.5	6.5	5.7
Manuel Fraga Iribarne	3.3	2.9	3.7	---
Santiago Carrillo	4.3	3.9	3.3	---
Pope John Paul II	---	6.8	6.9	6.2
Mikhail Gorbachev	---	---	---	6.2

The following three tabulations examine the resonance of the popularity of major personages within Spanish political culture. Let us begin with Table 4, which lays out the mean popularity for seven of these figures over time.

The personalities cover the spectrum from left to right. Besides the king, whose popularity is highest, we tracked the popularity of Adolfo Suárez, leader of the now-defunct UCD during the transition and first president of the constitutional monarchy during this period, and of Felipe González, leader of the PSOE and president since 1982. The popularity of leaders farther to the left (Santiago Carrillo, former head of the communist party) and the right (Manuel Fraga Iribarne, former head of the rightwing Alianza Popular) was monitored during the first three surveys. We also elicited perceptions of John Paul II, who assumed the papacy in 1979, from 1980 on and, in the most recent survey, the popularity of Mikhail Gorbachev.

The averages alone are of mainly documentary interest. Suárez has largely faded from the national picture; so have Fraga and Carrillo. González's popularity remains high though a bit diminished from the early years of his presidency. Next to the king, John Paul II appears to be the most popular figure in Spain. The times do not make for ideological coherence. The Pope is tied in popularity with the leader of the Soviet Union.

Table 5 presents the correlations of the same figures with three broader estimates—with satisfaction with democracy, support for the government, and satisfaction with the former regime. Behind the phalanxes of coefficients are important lessons about the evolution of Spanish political culture.

Some of the most significant patterns surround the figure of the king. Like Adolfo Suárez, he has been associated positively with the new regime and, in appreciable but declining measure, with the Franco regime. The king has acted as a buffer during the historical changeover from authoritarianism to democracy. His presence, personality and behavior have served to reduce the potential for an either-or confrontation between the two systems.

TABLE 5. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN POLITICAL FIGURES AND (1) SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY (2) GOVERNMENT SUPPORT, & (3) SATISFACTION WITH FRANCO REGIME, 1978-1990

	1978			1980			1984			1990	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)
King	.35	.42	.41	.36	.43	.37	.25	.25	.15	.28	.28
Suárez	.43	.53	.40	.41	.54	.43	.21	.16	.06	.11	.08
González	.25	.26	-.02	.32	.36	.00	.49	.67	-.19	.45	.65
Fraga	.17	.22	.48	.11	.18	.52	-.09	-.21	.52	---	---
Carrillo	.11	.04	-.21	.21	.16	-.25	.16	.21	-.02	---	---
Pope	---	---	---	.19	.32	.48	.02	-.01	.45	.11	.10
Gorbachev	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	.18	.10

The king's centrist image stands out in contrast to the rightwing identification of a figure like Fraga Iribarne, who was never so closely associated in the popular mind with democratization or more precisely with the younger cohort of democratizing elites to which the king belongs. The perceived links of Fraga with the old regime remained very high, .52 in 1984. at a time when the same correlation for the king had dropped to .15.

As for Felipe González, it is his perceived neutrality or at most mildly negative association with the old regime that stands out. Gonzalez is plainly identified with the sensible, instrumental center-left.

Table 6 extends the correlational analysis to the links between these figures and left-right placement and religiosity. The pattern of depolarization comes clearly into view.

TABLE 6. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN POLITICAL FIGURES AND (1) LEFT-RIGHT PLACEMENT & (2) RELIGIOSITY, 1978-1990

	1978		1980		1984		1990	
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
King	.43	.36	.39	.36	.12	.23	.06	.28
Suárez	.44	.35	.46	.38	.08	.10	.12	.08
González	-.14	.02	-.07	.00	-.33	-.04	-.25	.04
Fraga	.52	.34	.56	.35	.60	.30	---	---
Carrillo	-.36	-.17	-.37	-.26	-.39	-.31	---	---
Pope	---	---	.52	.56	.44	.56	.31	.54
Gorbachev	---	---	---	---	---	---	-.01	.01

Over time the popularity of the king, which in absolute terms has stayed very high, has become less bound up with ideologically conservative leanings. The drop is linear, from .43 in 1978, to .39 in 1980, to .12 in 1984, and to .06 in 1990. A major cause of this attenuation between the popularity of the kind and rightwing nostalgia and revanchism was the strong support displayed by the king for the new regime during the attempted coup of 1981. The king came to be seen not only as a link to the past but as a defender of democracy.

Of perhaps equal importance has been the consistent separation between religious feeling and the standing of Felipe González. He is obviously identified with the generic, versatile left. He has managed to stay clear of the religious right as well as the schematic left. He has avoided

entanglements with a sixties-style leftism of liberation at the same time that he has sidestepped moral conservatism. The mantle of sober reformism, of secularism as impartiality, has helped Gonzalez enact pro-business legislation that a manifestly conservative party could not have pushed through with comparable facility.[6]

In brief, symbolic politics has taken second place to economic pragmatism. This parting-of-the-ways of economic policy and ideological rigidity is probably the most striking feature of the new regime. We explore this development in the next section.

THE CULTURE OF POPULAR ECONOMICS

Insofar as change in Spanish political culture has a bottom line, it is that a zero-sum perspective has given way to flexibility in the framing of political stakes. In part this maturation has taken hold as a reflex against the bloodletting of the Civil War; bitter experience convinced elites that the benefits of accommodation outweighed the costs of confrontation (Gunther, Sani, Shabad, 1986; Lannon and Preston, 1990). Prosperity has also contributed to political maneuverability. The structural development that took off in the early sixties has made the country one of the top dozen industrial powers in the world and a full member of the European economic community. Spain has been in a more favorable position than countries like Argentina and Brazil, not to mention the Soviet-bloc countries, in which economic deterioration has impeded efforts at democratization.

As a generator of support for the new regime, economic growth has had three components. One is its sheer size and rapidity. Another is the impression of fairness associated with this growth—that is, the sense of relative justice stemming from the interpersonal, keeping-up-with-the-

Joneses comparisons that Spaniards make with respect to one another. Another involves the intertemporal evaluations of present conditions in the light of recollections of or attributions about the Franco regime.

Table 7 summarizes perceptions regarding all three components of economic growth. Spaniards were asked whether they felt economic conditions had improved, stayed about the same, or gotten worse for the working class, the middle class and the upper class. An identical set of questions was posed in 1984 and 1990. Responses were first elicited for "the years since 1982"—in other words, since the beginning of the socialist government—and then "in comparison with the last ten years of the Franco government."

TABLE 7. PERCEPTIONS OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE WORKING CLASS, MIDDLE CLASS & UPPER CLASS SINCE 1982 AND IN COMPARISON WITH THE FRANCO REGIME, 1984 AND 1990

% improved since 1982	1984	1990
working class	18	65
middle class	13	56
upper class	32	72
% improved in comparison with the situation under Franco	**1984**	**1990**
working class	47	73
middle class	34	65
upper class	33	73

The first-round results were promising but not spectacular for the PSOE government. In 1984, few Spaniards felt that the situation of any class had improved much under the socialists when the comparison was limited to the immediate past. But in contrast to the way they were under Franco, many more felt that economic conditions had improved, especially for the working class. Altering the frame of reference to establish a contrast between the two regimes worked in favor of the democratic leadership and showed that, despite considerable grumbling, the new system had a reservoir of legitimacy.[7] Even on these terms, however, favorable responses were in the minority.

By 1990, after eight years of PSOE rule, the political climate had changed dramatically. Confining the terms of comparison to the years since 1982 no longer produces a sense of jejune improvement or none at all. On the contrary, fulsome majorities contend that all classes—65 percent for the working class, 56 percent for the middle class, and 72 percent for the upper class—have done better. When the comparison is set against the Franco years, the perceived improvement comes out to be even higher.

The sense of feeling better off is pervasive. It would be hard to imagine a more ample base of support for the socialist government, and for Spanish democracy, than the political credit built up out of economic performance.[8]

Yet it would be naive to conclude that the figures speak for themselves. Several questions can be raised. First, is it in fact the case that economic considerations count for more than symbolic issues in influencing support for the government and satisfaction with democracy? Second, what "economic considerations" are at work? Pocketbook experience? Preferences on economic policy? Perceptions of economic conditions in the aggregate (Lewis-Beck, 1987)?

The answer to the first question is yes: by and large, perceptions of economic performance determine orientations toward the government more strongly than do positions on questions of principle or preferences on symbolic—e.g., religious—controversies. The latter issues are not wholly irrelevant, but as determinants of government support and opposition they pale in comparison with calculations surrounding the economy (McDonough, Barnes and López Pina, 1986a).

The answer to the second set of questions is more complex. Spaniards, rather like Americans, make judgments about the government more on the basis of their understanding of how well or badly the economy as a whole is doing than with reference to their immediate personal experience (their "pocketbooks"). Indeed, this may be less surprising in Spain than in the United States, where a legacy of rugged individualism is supposed to be powerful. In Spain, the statist tradition remains strong and citizens are probably more accustomed to viewing the economic system as a collective organism for whose health the government has major responsibility.

What may be equally symptomatic of the de-ideologization of Spanish politics is the tendency for Spaniards to evaluate government more on the basis of economic performance than by reason of their pro or con positions on issues of economic policy. While the economic arena is not consensual, there is broad agreement on the boundaries of policy. The PSOE government, by pre-empting many of the programs of the center-right, has muddled ideological divisions as effectively as did the Opus Dei technocrats of the Franco regime when they jettisoned neomercantilist models of autarchic development. Decades of economic ingenuity and opportunism have drained the categories of economic progressivism and conservatism of much of their

meaning. Retrospective evaluations of performance over-ride characteristically left-versus-right slants on economic issues (Fiorina, 1981).

When all these tendencies are considered together, it may seem that political culture has been excised from Spanish politics. Undeniably Spain is taking on the contours and accoutrements of a Brand-X industrial society. The González government has repeatedly mocked the pretensions of florid pensadores and political blowhards. The fact that economic factors count for more than symbolic considerations, and that on the whole ideology, whether economic or religious, counts for less than material performance provides evidence for the debility of political culture as obscurantism and religious atavism.

It does not, however, confirm the elimination of distinctive political traditions tout court. The interchange between culture and "rationality" is not a seesaw or a zero-sum game. Consider the data in Table 8. In their study of class awareness in the United States, the Jackmans (1983) inquired about the acceptability of income differences. A breakdown of responses from the original study, arrayed by the social class of respondents, is given at the top of Table 8. The two subtables arrayed below give the results of our replication for the 1984 and 1990 surveys in Spain.

In two respects the crossnational results are similar. The modal category in both countries is centrist: "some differences in income." In addition, within each country, the connection between class and preference follows an expected pattern. Lower class respondents, both Spanish and American, express relatively egalitarian views. For all this, the countries diverge markedly. "Large differences" are more acceptable in the United States; "practically no differences" are more legitimate in Spain. The variation

between countries with respect to appropriate income differences is greater than the variation between classes within countries.

TABLE 8. DESIRED INCOME DIFFERENCES BY SOCIAL CLASS, UNITED STATES (1975) AND SPAIN (1984 AND 1990)

	U.S.A. 1975		
	working	middle	upper
great difference	26%	32%	49%
some difference	56	58	42
practically no difference	12	8	7
don't know/no response	6	2	1
	SPAIN 1984		
	working	middle	upper
great difference	3%	4%	7%
some difference	65	69	68
practically no difference	31	26	24
don't know/no response	2	1	1
	SPAIN 1990		
	working	middle	upper
great difference	7%	11%	17%
some difference	60	63	64
practically no difference	29	23	17
don't know/no response	4	3	2

A distributive, semi-populist discourse is still common in Spain. This cultural inflection is understandable given the country's history of poverty and economic disparity and in light of the centralist tradition of the state (Veliz, 1980). The populist orientation shows a suggestive, if less than massive, shift between 1984 and 1990. There has been a clear increase in the tolerance for "large differences" in income, even though such differences do not approach the normative status they enjoy in the United States.

For our purposes the lesson is that crossnationally comparable regularities are filtered through cultural contexts crystallized out of distinctive histories. The cognitive maps by which Spaniards as well as Americans chart the paths between economics and politics are "rational" in the sense that considerations of economic performance figure prominently in evaluations of the government—more so, as a rule, than symbolic issues (Lewis-Beck, 1987). At the same time, the realm of the economic is itself enfolded within cultural norms. Just as the individualistic ethic tends to be hegemonic in the United States, the rhetoric of social egalitarianism and of governmental responsibility for economic management is more than a residual convention of Spanish political culture.[9]

SYMBOLIC POLITICS

Two ways of slicing the data have guided the forgoing analysis. We partitioned issues into economic and symbolic varieties. Within the economic realm, a further division was made between evaluations of material performance in the aggregate and perceptions of the condition of individual pocketbooks. An analogous distinction can be drawn in the non-economic domain: between symbolic issues that have public resonance and those with a narrower, nearly private scope. The distinction bears on the

extension of democratic forms and procedures to voluntary organizations and primary groups close to home. Conceivably, there may be no one-to-one relationship between preferences about and perceptions of policy on symbolic issues and notions about individual morality, for example. Public democracy may coexist with private hierarchy.

Table 9 suggests that Spaniards nurture different orientations toward the public domain, understood as degrees of satisfaction with the government and with democracy, and satisfaction with quality-of-life areas such as work and family. On the average, feelings about family life are more positive than those toward work and politics.[10]

Striking though they may be, however, these differences by themselves are inconclusive. Spaniards who feel good about their family life might also be positively disposed toward the public realm, and vice-versa, even as they keep the two at different levels. In this case, at least in relative terms, "the personal" and "the political" would tend to go together.

TABLE 9.

MEAN SATISFACTION (1=LOW . . . 10=HIGH)
ACROSS FOUR DOMAINS,
1990

Family	8.2
Work	6.9
Democracy	5.6
Government	5.5

But as it happens, the domains are (with some telltale exceptions to be noted momentarily) distinct in both the absolute and relative sense. Not only do attitudes toward abortion, for example, have practically no effect on support for or opposition to the government—something that we would expect from the dominance of economic over symbolic issues in shaping political assessments. It is also the case that preferences regarding abortion have little connection with family satisfaction and other, presumably private questions. The issue shows few upward or downward linkages. In outline, the pattern of dissociation between symbolic and personal matters parallels the differentiation Spaniards make between perceptions of economic conditions writ large and their own economic fortunes.

This is, however, just an outline. Filling it in requires us to recognize several nuances. In the first place, attitudes on moral and symbolic issues—on the legalization of abortion, on gay rights, and the like—are associated with left-right placement, more closely in fact than are preferences on questions of economic policy. Yet this whole bundle of ideological orientations is itself only very feebly linked with judgments of the government or economic performance. Hence, the political consequences of such issues tend to be marginal. Positions on moral issues weigh more heavily than preferences on economic policy as organizing elements of left-right leanings. But ideology of this sort is something of a cultural specter, compared to evaluations of economic conditions, in influencing stands toward the government and indeed toward the political system.

Second, on the whole, attitudes regarding moral policy stand apart from the satisfaction or dissatisfaction that individual Spaniards find in their family lives. To be sure, the labor market situation of individuals affects their preferences on such issues. For example, working women are more likely

than women who stay at home to favor legalized abortion. But neither these conditions nor these attitudes are related to degrees of support for the government.

Third, positions on one crucial issue contradict in part the dissociation between public and private realms. Agree-disagree responses to the statement that "the best thing for a woman is to keep busy at home" show a modest but significant relation not only with reports of family satisfaction but also with opposition to the government. While not overwhelming, both associations persist in the midst of generally stronger factors involved in family and political satisfaction.[11]

At first glance, the pattern seems surprising. The abortion issue appears clearly to be the hotter issue. It shows greater ideological polarization than women's-rights-in-general. Yet it is the women-at-home/women-at-work split that affects both governmental popularity and family satisfaction, while the abortion controversy does not.

What is most probably at stake in this "generic" women's issue is the passing of a powerful emblem of a way of life. Women's labor force participation is still low but increasing in Spain, compared to rates in other industrial countries. The family as a shrine of female domesticity reverberates, more than the question of abortion, with the traditions of the old Spain in the face of accelerating modernization. It is the inherited role of women, and of the family as a sanctuary for a threatened way of life, that constitutes one of the most powerful of symbolic issues in Spain. It bridges public and private realms.

THE PUZZLE OF ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE

We have documented one trend that by most theoretical accounts favors democratization and another that may be less benign for the institutionalization of democracy. Ideological polarization between the left and right seems to be fading in Spain. Yet participation in voluntary associations—the foundational units of democratic comity—appears to be in stasis if not decline.

Only scraps of data are available to set the Spanish condition in crossnational context and thereby to assess the supposed "lowness" of associational life in Spain by empirical standards (Di Palma, 1970). Nevertheless, some pieces of internal information can be mustered to make out the contours of organizational involvement. This information comes in two forms. One consists of the reports of membership in voluntary organizations mentioned at the outset of the analysis. The other is made up of responses to a question about how close to or distant from their neighbors Spaniards feel.[12]

These associational indicators are themselves unrelated; organizational membership and neighborhood ties vary independently of one another. Neighborhood linkages and membership in voluntary associations need not, of course, be mutually exclusive, but neither does one seem to build upon another.

The second pattern is that local links and associational membership go in opposite directions when broken down by the usual suspects—by age, education, social class, and the like. The pertinent trends are given in Table 10.

TABLE 10. NEIGHBORHOOD TIES AND MEMBERSHIP IN VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS BY AGE, EDUCATION, CLASS & LOCALE OF RESIDENCE, CONTROLLING FOR GENDER, 1990

Percent Reporting "Very Close Relations" with Neighbors by Age

	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Men	10	13	12	16	26	26	28
Women	13	12	13	20	30	31	34

Percent Belonging to One or More Voluntary Associations by Age

	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Men	39	39	48	51	36	34	19
Women	22	30	33	28	24	16	15

Percent Reporting "Very Close Relations" with Neighbors by Education

	None	Incomplete Primary	Complete Primary	Secondary	Higher
Men	21	28	24	11	13
Women	28	30	22	16	9

Percent Belonging to One or More Voluntary Associations by Education

	None	Incomplete Primary	Complete Primary	Secondary	Higher
Men	17	26	35	46	57
Women	13	14	25	35	39

Table 10. (continued)

Percent Reporting "Very Close Relations" with Neighbors by Class Identification

	Working class	Middle class	Upper-middle class
Men	22	17	11
Women	23	23	15

Percent Belonging to One or More Voluntary Associations by Class Identification

	Working class	Middle class	Upper-middle class
Men	32	43	53
Women	20	28	34

Percent Reporting "Very Close Relations" with Neighbors & Percent Belonging to One or More Voluntary Associations by Population of Locale of Residence

	200-2,000	to 5,000	to 10,000	to 30,000	to 50,000	to 200,000	to 1,000,000	more than 1,000,000
%close	31	25	24	22	19	21	14	16
%members	19	28	28	28	42	32	34	35

As might be expected, Spaniards living in small towns are likely to feel closer to their neighbors than those living in large cities. The same goes for women, who stay at home more often than men. Somewhat more striking is the decline of "neighborliness" with risings levels of education, for both men and women.

It is the juxtaposition of the seemingly commonplace regularities associated with neighborliness and the mirror-image tendencies associated with membership in voluntary organizations that produces the most revealing configurations. Working-class Spaniards are likelier to feel close to their neighbors than do their upper-middle class peers. At the same time, Spaniards toward the upper reaches of the social hierarchy are likelier to belong to voluntary associations. Put simplistically: lower-class Spaniards have friends and neighbors; upper- and middle-class Spaniards have colleagues and associates. The reciprocal pattern buttresses the plausibility of "the strength of weak ties" syndrome (Granovetter, 1976): the tendency for secondary networks to expand independently, if not at the expense, of primary ties.[13]

Significant variations also emerge on this offsetting pattern. Neighborhood linkages build up over time. What portion of this increase is traceable to the life-cycle and what portion may be attributable to more permanent generational differences is problematic, although the greater mobility of younger cohorts lends weight to an interpretation stressing genuine historical change. However this may be, it is clear that membership in voluntary organizations follows a curvilinear pattern with age, rising toward the middle years (40-49 is the peak for men, 30-39 for women), then declining. While some of this may reflect a falling-off in social activity with advanced age, a good deal of it must be due to the fact that Spaniards over 50 had few opportunities in their early years, dominated as they were by Francoism, for participation in civil society.

Can any of this help explain the apparent stagnation in associational activity in Spain? Two complementary patterns are suggestive. First, while participation in voluntary associations tends to rise from small towns to

larger cities, it does so only up to a point (in cities between 50,000 and 200,000), dropping off (though not to small-town levels) thereafter. Progressive "urbanization" does not feed linearly into a denser "civil society"; "modernization" does not simply go up and up.

Second, while the decline of neighborliness is inversely linear with age, with older Spaniards tending to be more tightly integrated in their local communities, the advance of membership in voluntary associations is curvilinear with age. In effect, neighborliness is receding more rapidly than associational membership is advancing. This may account in part for the scant and uncertain progress observed in organizational activity since the onset of democratization to the present time in Spain.

CONCLUSIONS

The reconstruction of past mentalités is so flawed an enterprise that we will never know for sure what portion of the de-ideologization of Spanish politics represents "objective" change and what portion reflects the demystification of stereotypes associated with the black legend of Hispanic zealotry. The softening of the antagonisms between left and right has occurred amid unprecedented prosperity and a massive transformation of the class structure of the country; it also reflects a lesson about the hazards of conflict without quarter and the benefits of compromise, learned at great cost.

The depiction of Spanish politics as inveterately polarized at least provided an interpretive template with a modicum of verisimilitude. The passing of this dualistic imagery may increase the appeal of another, not altogether implausible but still insufficient stereotype, one that associates the unaccustomed pragmatism of political life with anomie in civil society (Aranguren, 1991). The puzzle is non-trivial. Spaniards are more concerned

about crime in the streets than with disputes between the political left and right, and associational density does appear to be low in Spain.[14] Yet the polity shows no signs of coming apart. What holds the system together, then, aside from good economic times? Evidently, a strong reading of political culture—an insistence on norms as societal glue—stands in need of correction.

Several circumstantial and theoretical factors can be brought into play. Consider first the timing of democratization in Spain. The institutional environment and organizational equipment surrounding the emancipation of Spanish politics from Francoism were not the same as that associated with waves of democratization in the late eighteenth, the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. As several observers have pointed out, Spain entered on redemocratization at a time when the technology of mass politics—specifically, the mass media—had become widespread and powerful (Pérez Díaz, 1991). In coming to estimates of participation in voluntary organizations, our analysis has implicitly highlighted the significance of alternative modes of orchestrating public opinion and interests (Lawson and Merkl, 1988) and has layed the groundwork for subsequent investigation of the role of the mass media. It reinforces the possibility that the standard institutional vehicles of representative democracy—political parties, labor unions, and the like—no longer have the functional monopoly over mass politics they might once have had.

Second, depolarization entails a certain privatization—that is, a distancing from the holistic, integrative, quasi-redemptive visions favored by the maximalists and terrible simplifiers of Spanish politics. At the popular level it is doubtful (as the dialectic between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza intimates) whether a political temper of this extremist, salvific sort ever held sway. What we may be witnessing is the confluence of two forces, one

modern and one traditional. On the one hand, the electronic media may operate for some Spaniards as mechanisms of vicarious participation or spectatorship. On the other, privatism as a version of "amoral familism" has long been a staple of Spanish society (Gilmore, 1987). At some point it must become an empirical question whether the former development is prejudicial to democratic consolidation, and whether the latter tradition is in fact a subversive atavism.

Third, the declawing of the stock antinomies of Spanish politics has resulted not only from prosperity and from the lessons of the past but also from the increasing permeability of Spanish culture to international values conveyed by the media. The under-organized society of the last years of the Franco regime was not shielded from television and tourism. However, at the same time that Spain seems to be undergoing an internationalization of popular culture, it may also be experiencing a localization of political organization and participation. Except for voting, very few citizens "act" nationally in any political system. The devolution of political power toward the autonomias and municipal governments of Spain has almost certainly facilitated local associationalism. This raises the question of how micro-networks connect up with movements and organizations of larger scope.

The relatively uncharted landscape of local involvement in Spain also conveys a lesson regarding the study of the culture of mass politics. Political science is still afflicted by measures of "trust" and "system support" which, like classic tracts, everyone cites and no one reads. Such indicators are known to be stratospheric, the Platonic vapors of theory as highmindedness, and efforts at assessing "legitimacy," for example, tend to turn into a game of correlating attitudes with attitudes. Mapping the morphology and flux of associational networks is apt to yield a steadier purchase on political culture—

one that more closely approximates a systematic anthropology of behavior and the meanings attached to it—across the multiple domains in which people actually live.

Finally, the differentiation we have documented between public and private spheres is not peculiarly Spanish (Campbell, Converse and Rodgers, 1976), and it might be taken as a sign of the maturation of Spanish mass politics. In the midst of the uncertainties that democracy is supposed to institutionalize, citizens may seek out havens of predictability and hierarchy. Democracy writ large becomes a routine and remote convenience, favoring tolerance and procedural guarantees. This compartmentalization may help account for the less-than-overwhelming enthusiasm for workplace democracy, the mixed feelings about flattened-out family structures, and the hard-to-detect connections between these domains and politics with a capital "P."

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NOTES

[1]The primary source for our analysis consists of four surveys conducted in 1978, 1980, 1984 and 1990; the number of respondents in each was approximately 3,000.

[2]The theories form something of a historical sequence. The emphasis on parties emerged out of the ambience of classical pluralism. The neocorporatist view is closely identified with the emergence of advanced industrial societies in Western Europe, operating in a Keynesian mode during the sixties and early seventies (Berger, 1981; Meier, 1987). The view that accentuates the media has a postmodernist ring.

[3]For the left-right scale, 1 = left . . . .10 = right. For the satisfaction scales, 1 = dissatisfied . . . 10 = satisfied.

[4]Note to ambiguity of religion; Pérez Días (1991a).

[5]The apparent increase in fond memories of the Franco regime is spurious. As we move forward in time, fewer and fewer Spaniards have any recollections of the fascist regime, and those who do tend increasingly to consist of a shrinking group of older, conservative Spaniards.

[6]Note to correlation between Gorbachev and JPII.

[7]Compare Rem mer (1990).

[8]See however Campos and Alvarez (1990).

[9]Note to same pattern from E. Europe/Soviet surveys.

[10]Note to question-wording.

[11]Note to evidence (correlations).

[12]Note to question-wording.

[13]Note to effect of geographic mobility.

[14]In 1990 we asked repondents how important they felt five different problems were. The conflict "between citizens who repect the laws and criminals" came out on top (55 percent said it was very important). In second place came the conflict "between who have money and those don't" (37 percent very important); in third place the conflict between "the nationalists

[Basques, Catalans, Gallegos] and the rest of Spaniards" (22 percent very important); in fourth place the conflict "between those of the left and those who consider themselves on the right" (13 percent); and in fifth place the conflict "between those who follow the morals and the teaching of the church and those who don't" (12 percent).

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